



# **AEV Operations Handbook**

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Animal EVAC Volunteers  
Established 2002  
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**Animal EVAC**  
**MOVING YOUR PETS TO SAFETY**

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## Animal EVAC Volunteers Mission Statement

Primary Activity: AEV's primary activity is conducted under the authority of Animal Control or Animal Rescue Team personnel in Jefferson County, Colorado. Agencies in Boulder, Clear Creek, El Paso, Gilpin, Park and other counties may request AEV's support through Jefferson County Animal Control or the Jeffco Animal Rescue Team (JCART).

When an area is threatened by wildfire or another emergency situation, the responsible Agency's officials contact AEV seeking assistance in evacuating small animals from the area. AEV then calls on its volunteers to provide the Agency with the requested assistance. AEV volunteers donate their equipment, time and animal handling expertise to transport small animals out of the fire-threatened areas to designated animal shelters or other locations. AEV also assists agency officials in maintaining records of all animals that have been evacuated.

Secondary Activities: AEV helps responsible agencies with large-scale animal seizures and the sheltering of companion animals. We also provide information to the public regarding emergency planning at community events.

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## Preparation

An **Operations Bag** should be carried by each volunteer when involved in emergency operations. Following is a list of recommended items:

- AEV T-shirt
- AEV ID badge (required to volunteer at an incident)
- AEV dashboard card (emailed to all call-out list volunteers)
- Jacket or long sleeve sweatshirt
- Hat
- Cell phone and portable charger, if you have one
- Water – enough to sustain you for up to 4 hours
- Snack food items/energy bars/non-perishable food – to sustain you for 4 hours
- Notepad/clipboard
- Pens and pencils
- Leather gloves
- Black *Sharpie* pens
- Two leads (slip-noose style preferred)
- Duct tape
- High quality treats to help catch skittish dogs and cats
- Utility knife, small pocketknife or scissors (to cut zip ties, etc.)
- Headlamp or flashlight (s) with spare batteries
- AEV Operations Handbook (available on AEV's web site)
- Recent versions of county maps, if you have them

Be sure to have your operations bag with you or in your vehicle at all times. When you are called out, add enough water and nonperishable food to sustain you for 4 hours. Also add any medications, reading glasses, etc., that you will need during that time.

Below are other items you may wish to include:

- Playing cards, book, or other items to pass the time while waiting at Staging
- Folding chair
- AEV business cards, if you have them. (They may also be provided at Staging, and facsimiles can also be emailed to call-out list volunteers.)
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Sunglasses
- Magnifying glass
- Whistle

If you will supply a vehicle or trailer for an incident, following are recommended items:

- 5 gallons of fresh water for animals
- AEV magnetic sign (if available)
- Full tank of gas, safety check
- First aid kit
- Additional leads
- Water dishes
- Several old pillowcases for cats
- Small dog and cat crates
- Paper towels
- Trash bags, plastic bags
- If you wish, you may also include a spray bottle of Rescue, diluted as recommended by the supplier.

### **Mobilization**

**NOTE:** AEV members are authorized to mobilize to the staging area and/or perform field operations ONLY at the request of the responsible Agency. **Going to the site without authorization is NOT permitted and could result in dismissal as an AEV volunteer.** If our mobilization is requested, you will either be contacted directly by the AEV Dispatcher who has been designated for the incident or notified by another volunteer as a result of activation of the call-down list. Under certain circumstances, AEV may also respond outside of Jefferson County; the response will be requested and coordinated through Jeffco Animal Control or the Jefferson County Animal Rescue Team (JCART).

### **Types of Operations**

Any AEV member can participate as long as they have completed the AEV orientation class, if it is offered, completed the appropriate paperwork, and fulfilled AEV's minimum annual training and/or event requirements.

Type 1 – This is the most common type of operation in which AEV expects to participate. In some cases, AEV personnel will be accompanied within the evacuation area by a Sheriff's Deputy or other Agency personnel. In addition to assisting with evacuations, AEV personnel will assist with transporting the animals from the staging area to the designated animal shelter or other location, or assisting the responsible Agency with other duties as needed. Type 1 operations include wildland fires, floods, and most other disaster or emergency situations including animal seizures.

Type 2-- If AEV personnel are not needed in the field, AEV has agreed to assist any shelter, whether it has been authorized temporarily to respond to the emergency or is an ongoing shelter officially participating in the emergency response. While working at the shelter, AEV personnel will be under the supervision of that shelter.

AEV may also fulfill other roles as requested through JCART or Animal Control.

## **Activation**

1. JCART will contact one of the AEV volunteers on the activation list, which is updated regularly by AEV's officers. The AEV contact person will record the name of the agency person and that person's contact information, the time, the incident name, and all other information given. As soon as possible, a Team Leader and Dispatcher will be designated for the incident.
2. The initial activation may be an immediate callout or a standby notification. If the callout is immediate, potential volunteers will be told where the staging area is located and how many vehicle teams are needed. In the case of an immediate callout, the Team Leader and/or Dispatcher will immediately contact enough AEV volunteers to fill the initial order and email all remaining volunteers to determine additional volunteer availability. Once the Team Leader departs for the staging area, the Dispatcher will proceed with any additional phone calls or emails that are needed. As appropriate and if time permits, the Team Leader and Dispatcher will update AEV volunteers on the status of the incident using email.

As time permits, the Dispatcher will respond to emails to determine availability for an additional incident or for the next day, i.e., the next "Operational Period" of the incident. A volunteer shift can vary. Expect to be in the field for at least 4 hours (up to 8 hours in certain circumstances). Time may be spent at Staging, collecting animals as directed, and/or delivering animals as directed to the specified location(s).

## **Drug, Alcohol, and Lethal Weapons Policy**

All volunteers participating in AEV training and field operations are expected to be unimpaired by drugs or alcohol. As a condition of participation in these activities, all volunteers must agree to follow the following policies:

1. No volunteer will respond to a callout if they have consumed alcohol or drugs within the previous eight (8) hours.
2. No volunteer will participate in any callout or training event if they are impaired by alcohol or drugs that impair cognitive and/or motor control skills.
3. No alcohol or drugs of the type described above shall be consumed by any volunteer during a callout or training activity.
4. No volunteer will respond to a callout, or participate in training, if they are under the influence of prescription or over-the-counter medications that could negatively affect the physical or cognitive abilities needed to complete their duties during the callout or training event.
5. In the event of an accident or any situation during a callout which results in bodily injury and/or property damage, the supervising agency may require the volunteer(s) involved to submit to testing for alcohol and/or drugs. By responding to a callout, the volunteer agrees to submit to any testing required by the supervising agency.
6. All volunteers participating in AEV training and field operations are expected to comply with a no-lethal weapons policy, including but not limited to firearms, arrow-

based weapons, and knives other than utility knives, small pocketknives, or scissors.

Violation of any part of this policy is grounds for immediate removal from the incident and/or prohibition from participation in any future AEV training or callouts.

### **Staging Area Procedures**

1. **Make sure that your own family, animals and property are properly cared for before leaving for the staging area.** If the incident is in your immediate area, or you think your home might be included within the evacuation area, you should notify the Dispatcher of this and should NOT go to the staging area.
2. Before you leave for the staging area, record your vehicle's starting mileage and other applicable information on the Mileage Record Form (see Appendix A list). Record your mileage when you arrive at the staging area.
3. Be sure to have your AEV magnetic signs or an AEV dashboard card to identify your vehicle at roadblocks which you may encounter. The AEV dashboard card is provided to Call-Out list volunteers via email.
4. If possible, team vehicle drivers should pick up their riders before going to the staging area. Parking may be limited at the staging area, and there may be traffic congestion on the way. Wear your AEV T-shirt to the staging area and bring your AEV badge.
5. When you arrive at the staging area, sign in at the location designated by the IMT or the responsible Agency's Staging Manager. Also sign in with the AEV team leader. If no IMT sign-in has been established at the staging area, AEV should use its own Check-in Sheet (see Appendix A list). If not already established, an AEV team leader should be appointed to act as a point of contact with the responsible Agency. The AEV team leader should be selected from a list of volunteers qualified to perform this function. Specifically, team leaders should meet the following minimum qualifications:
  - a. Have a minimum of one year of experience as an AEV volunteer.
  - b. Have completed Basic Incident Command Training (IS-100 and IS-200).  
Also helpful is completion of AEV's two-hour training class specifically for Team Leaders (if offered), experience in a previous AEV call-out, and preferably experience shadowing an AEV team leader during a call-out.
6. The team leader should begin to fill out a JCART Staging Log (see Appendix A list). All vehicles and trailers that will be used during the incident must pass a basic safety check (proper operation of headlights, brake lights, turn signals, and hazard lights) at the staging area.
7. The AEV team leader should obtain as much information as possible regarding the evolving incident, including:
  - a. who is in command
  - b. what are the current and expected weather and fire conditions
  - c. what evacuation orders are in effect or anticipated

8. The AEV team leader must consider the number of AEV volunteers who have responded and maintain proper “span of control,” as required by the ICS structure. Assistant team leaders should be appointed if needed; these personnel should be qualified team leaders if available, but this is not required. All AEV team members should understand where AEV fits into the ICS structure implemented for this incident. (See Appendix B).
9. All AEV team members should learn the communication plan for the incident and obtain one radio for each vehicle. AEV maintains a cache of radios which are pre-programmed with most IMT and Park County radio frequencies that are likely to be used on an incident. Prior to leaving Staging, learn which frequencies to use for communicating with other team members and the responsible Agency officers, as well as which frequencies to monitor for safety purposes. In addition, learn which frequency should be used in the event of a medical emergency. In some cases, radios from the responsible Agency or IMT caches may also be issued to AEV members. Identify the proper call sign to be used by your unit during field operations.
10. Exchange cell phone numbers with all members of the AEV team, to be used as a “back up” means of communication. Make sure that the AEV team leader is aware of these numbers.
11. Obtain all field forms, and animal handling equipment which will be needed to perform your duties. AEV maintains a supply of these items.
12. **Remain calm, patient and flexible.** The situation will likely be chaotic and confusing. You may have to wait at Staging for several hours before you are directed to deploy to the field. In some cases, you may never be deployed.
13. Be prepared to deploy to the field as soon as the Jeffco Animal Control or other Agency’s personnel have adequately briefed you and issued orders. Before leaving Staging, make sure that you fully understand your directions, and ask as many questions as necessary. **If you are feeling uncomfortable or unsafe, you may decline to participate in an operation. Remember, safety is your first concern!**

### **Animal Evacuation Procedures**

1. When traveling within an evacuation area, always turn on your vehicle headlights. Use hazard flashers if you must park where other vehicles may be traveling. Be alert for emergency vehicles, evacuation traffic, smoke, and wildland firefighting operations. Drive within the posted speed limit and obey all traffic rules.
2. When you arrive at a property, back the vehicle into a parking spot so that you can exit the area quickly if needed.
3. Before removing any animals, double-check to make sure that no one is home.
4. Assume the worst case, namely, it is likely that the animals we are rescuing may be fearful or irritated. Calm on our part will help produce a like effect on the people we are assisting, as well as on their animals.
5. When loading an animal into a crate or trailer box, assume that the animal will try to bite. For dogs, form a collar with a sliding leash, ease it over the head, and wrap the leash portion around the muzzle. This is an effective way to avoid a dog bite

to the face or arms when loading the dog into the dog box. Practice on your own dog to see how the dog reacts to this maneuver.

6. Being patient with the animal will calm it. Be sure to always wear leather gloves or gauntlets when working with animals unfamiliar to you. More information about the handling of unfamiliar animals in stressful situations can be found in Public Documents on [www.animalevac.org](http://www.animalevac.org).
7. Be sure to keep all identifying information for each animal, if given to you by a responsible Agency's official. If you personally extract an animal, keep a record with a description of the animal and the address where it was taken from. This information must be conveyed to the shelter personnel and/or passed along to the AEV personnel who will be transferring the animals to the shelter.
8. If you are adept with your phone camera, take shots of locations, animals etc. That will help clarify details if there is confusion during an incident. Note on the paperwork the name of the volunteer who took the photo(s).
9. If there is anything notable on the property (such as an open door or something that is damaged), take a photo of that, as well. Report the issue when you return to Staging.
10. If called for by the incident, leave an AEV business card or other contact card as requested by the governing Agency in a conspicuous location at the home, indicating what animals were removed. A facsimile of an AEV business card is available via email from AEV.
11. Make sure that the AEV team leader and the Agency's officers are aware of your whereabouts at all times. If there is any change in plans from your expected route or the approximate timeframe that will be required to complete a task, be sure to update your immediate supervisor.
12. If you identify any dangerous situation such as hazardous materials, an animal which you are unable to control, confrontational residents, or unexpected fire conditions, leave the area immediately and notify an officer of the responsible Agency or other appropriate law enforcement personnel.

### **Demobilization**

1. Return/sign in radios and any other equipment that has been issued to you.
2. Return all paperwork to the responsible Agency personnel as appropriate.
3. Make sure that anyone who arrived with you leaves with you or that you otherwise account for their location and travel arrangements.
4. Return any equipment which you removed from AEV's inventory, unless instructed otherwise.
5. Notify the AEV Dispatcher at [info@animalevac.org](mailto:info@animalevac.org) that you are finished at that location, and advise the Dispatcher of your availability for the next Operational Period.
6. Sign out at the same location you signed in **(with both AEV and the Agency in charge at the incident)**.
7. When you arrive home, complete the Mileage Record Form and keep it until the end of the calendar year, in case reimbursement is offered (or to use if you itemize deductions for your income taxes).

# Appendix A

## Forms List

Below are forms that AEV members may encounter during an incident. For samples of the forms marked with a checkmark, go to the “Public Documents” tab on AEV’s website

### JCART Forms will be provided at Staging

- ✓ Emergency Evacuation/Rescue Request (JCSO/AC 997)
  - ✓ Staging Check-in/Check Out (JCSO/AC 978)
  - ✓ Shift Activity Log (JCSO/AC 976)
- ✓ Small Animal Emergency Impound Form (JCSO/AC 961-1)

### AEV Forms

- ✓ Mileage Record Form
- ✓ Incident Check-In (Also available at Staging)
  - ✓ Training Meeting Log

**Appendix B**  
**Incident Command System**

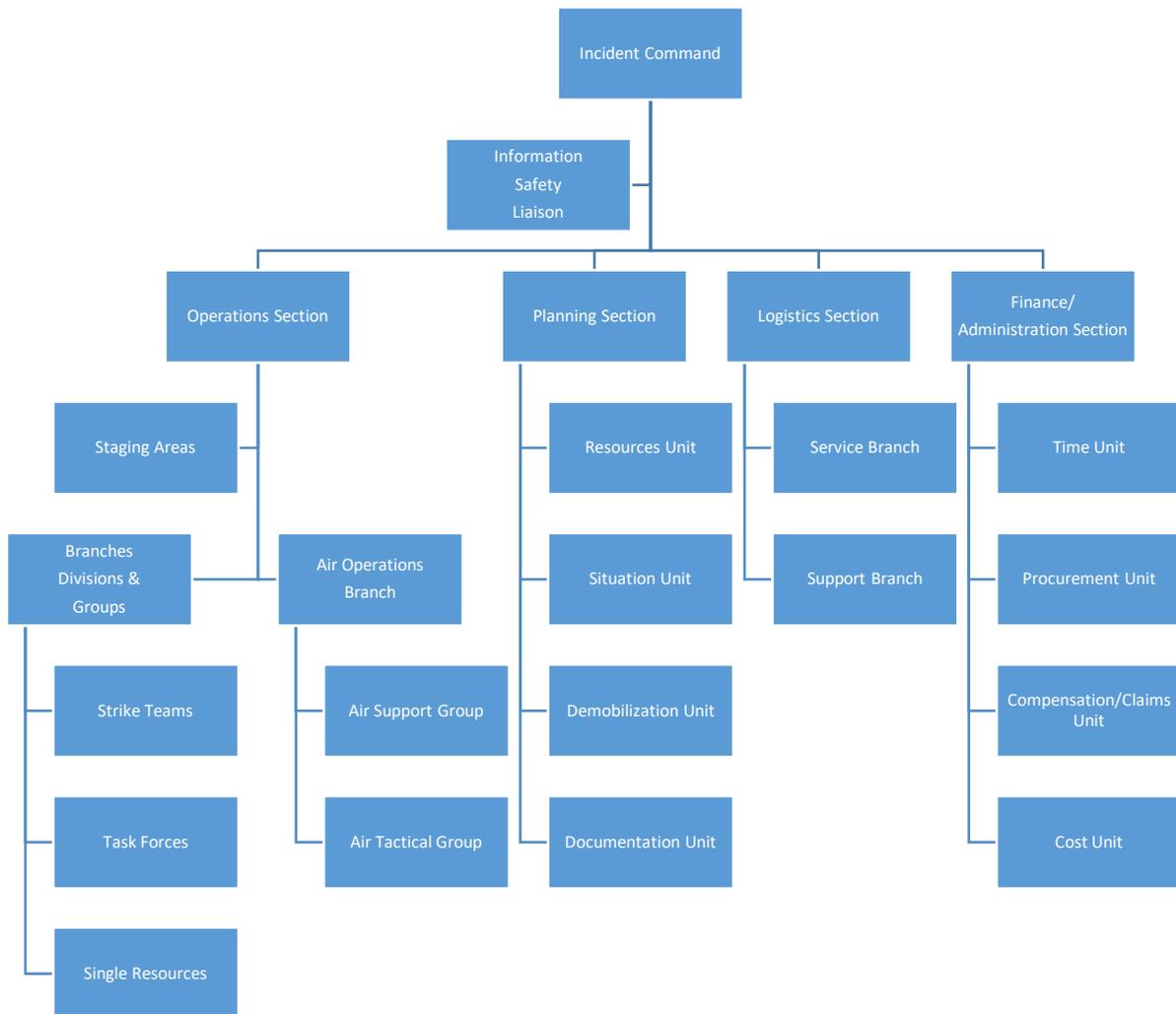
# Incident Command System Organization

Use the link below to access the most current information

<https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/icsforms/>

Then find ICS Form 207, the org chart

**[The chart below is for reference only]**



## **Recommended FEMA Training**

IS-100.c Introduction to the Incident Command System online course through the FEMA Independent Study Program:

<http://training.fema.gov/is/crslist.aspx>

Other recommended FEMA online courses:

IS-10.a - Animals in Disaster: Awareness and Preparedness

IS-11.a - Animals in Disaster: Community Planning

IS-200.c - Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response

IS-700.b – Introduction to the National Incident Management System

IS-800.d – National Response Framework, An Introduction